

Mixed Groups Discussion Notes
Joint Working Group Meeting - May 27, 2015

Group 1

Discussion of Draft Themes (**bold** are consensus items):

- **Themes look like a pretty good list and are a good start to implementable tasks.**
- Direction to City Council: **There is no silver bullet to fix this problem. Incremental changes are worthwhile.** Make some decisions! Change is needed to address the issue.
- All the needs won't be met with increased density. Need ADU/OAU; occupancy limit changes.
- Do pilots – try things and measure them. Replicate where they already work e.g. ADU
- Assess permanently affordable housing program – increase number of units; consider more control to decrease fraud.
- Solutions for middle income are most difficult – keep seeking.

Highest Impact Areas:

- **Protect Neighborhood Character Theme: really like this.** Look locally and regionally for solutions: some neighborhood will embrace changes – ask them.
- **Transportation /parking solutions** – will be necessary to do in conjunction with housing changes. Issue about more people is really about more cars. Work in conjunction with employers to address transportation impacts.
- Work on demand-side – job growth and CU growth – regional jobs; regional housing; **better regional transportation & parking.**

Value of the Housing discussion:

- There has been a lot of listening/ people working together.
 - Suggested solutions that are do-able.
 - People are still showing up.
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Group 2

Discussion of Draft Themes:

Prioritize Preservation

AirBNB/Short-term rentals – How to enforce? Raised issue around absentee condo owners who rent out their homes and travel for six months

- Is the issue one of affordability (need the money from AirBNB to afford to live) or are they just supporting their long vacation habit?
- Infractions for owners' associations
- Issue is overall housing stock becoming tied up in the short-term rental market

Tiny homes:

- Can we have the tiny home conversation along with the mobile home park discussion?
They deliver many of the same benefits
- We should be looking at tiny home communities

Diverse Choice

- “Beds” (shelter beds) are not housing and shouldn’t be included in the count. Housing should be permanent.
- Occupancy/Coops/ADUs/OAUs – don’t lump them together – separate them out. People expressed concern with lumping them together both from an advocacy perspective as well as cautiously supporting some but not all of these tools.
- Political power and participation of renters was discussed. Question was raised whether renters really were disempowered given the turnout. Renters at the table expressed difficulty finding opportunities where their voices could be heard.

Jobs/Housing Balance

- This should address transportation
- Even if steps are taken to address this, the situation will persist long after the policy interventions (Several people voiced support for this)
- Regional transportation
 - City should sponsor employee shuttles from Lafayette, Louisville, etc
 - City should assume more of a leadership role and be more regulatory
 - Need more focused long-range planning addressing this
 - Coziness (density) is a good way to approach the jobs/housing balance (ADUs, etc.)

Neighborhood Character

- Pilots are a good way to preserve neighborhood character
 - Response: It depends what you are testing.
- North Boulder has character that supports greater density, particularly along Broadway
 - However some of the most vocal residents in Dakota Ridge are against it.
- Comment on greenbelt and height limit: We are our own worst enemy
- Land uses can change (gave example of 28th Street Frontage rezoning) – Questioned the premise of “locking ourselves in time”

Partnerships

- City could highlight partners (e.g., service providers such as CareConnect), provide a list
- ADUs/OAUs – there are numerous partnerships that could facilitate these.
- Explore funding for grants for neighborhood improvements (identify funding sources above the local level)

Regional Planning and Action

- Regional Planning is the key; get everyone on the same boat (two voiced support for this)
 - Denver and Boulder are the only communities with comprehensive services for the homeless – get other communities to do their part
- Add State-Level Advocacy for Rent Control back into the mix

Comprehensive Approach

- CU increases enrollment and increases pressure on the broader housing market (one other supported this statement)
 - CU needs to take responsibility
 - But CU has sovereignty
 - Some portion of CU students/staff don't want to live in CU-provided housing
 - Student-bashing is a common response to this housing conversation – fact is: we are a university town
- Unbundled parking (three support it)
 - Millennials don't expect to own cars as much
- Coops are a comprehensive approach (multiple benefits)

Efficient Use of Existing Stock

- This is the best options (four support this statement)
- Like every strategy statement/option, this could be a good approach with appropriate study and differentiation of neighborhoods.
- The occupancy limit is not rocket science – tie occupancy to factors such as parking, lot size, bedroom count, etc.

Group 3

Discussion of Draft Themes:

Prioritize Preservation

- Denotes historic
- Explore affordable housing as a neighborhood
- “Contributes to neighborhood character” is confusing with historic
- Not historic boulder
- Prioritize preservation of affordable housing
- Identify where to protect affordable housing
- Small lot preservation should be on the short list of tools
- Short term rentals should be removed from the list
- Protect mobile home park residents
- Consider conversion of mobile home parks
- Change to enhance mobile home park living opportunities

Support Diverse Housing Options

- Most important
- Should add redevelopment to the end of the rationale statement
- In tools should separate ADUs, coops, ODUs. Separate issues.
- Should add retain and improve permanently affordable housing for low income residents

Improve the Jobs- Housing Balance

- Change to Consider the Jobs Housing Balance
- Related and need to understand the tradeoffs
- Add to short list provide housing and cutting jobs not the answer
- What is the right balance?
- Based on trends low wage workers need to be considered
- Balance must include costs of development and wages relatives to buyers/renters
- Cut jobs?
- Cut housing?
- Creation of more affordable housing should be a tool

Protect Neighborhood Character and Quality

- What are we protecting?
- How to engage?
- Engage with subcommunity not just neighborhood associations
- How to engage diverse voices in neighborhoods?
- Define neighborhoods more broadly
- Outside facilitators?
- What is the neighborhoods role in meeting the goal?
- Do we want to preserve poor quality? What should be preserved?
- Juxtaposition in neighborhoods
- Protection means no change
- Promote neighborhood discussions of city-wide goals

Partner to Address Challenges and Expand Options

- Rationale should include “to preserve affordable housing”
- More City and nonprofit housing partner collaboration
- City partner with CU in productive way
- Behavior not occupancy
- CU has the land but the City holds the key to development
- Student cooperatives
- Partner with orientation and resource centers
- Student housing is an important link

Engage in Regional Planning and Action

- Important to consider

Take a Comprehensive Approach to Affordability

- Location efficiencies and energy efficiency is key
- How do you get people to engage in behaviors that further affordable housing? i.e., bike/bus vs. SOV
- Child care cost offset should also be a key to elevating housing burden
- Better transit = better use
- Still other factors to consider i.e., parking limits

Use Existing Housing More Efficiently

- Agree – no time to fully discuss
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Group 4

Discussion of Draft Themes (**bold** are consensus items):

- Need to address tension between Preservation and fostering diverse choices (current stock lacks choices)
- Neighborhoods more about choice and diversity of options than “protection”
- Really liked last one (Efficiency) (and add ADU/OAU to bullets)
- Noted that some ideas were broadly recommended: occupancy, ADU/OAU, transportation/regionalism, and tiny/small homes
- The community is open to change to tackle affordable housing issues. Council should not be timid and be true to the process; be more daring with pilot programs.
- Supporting community “literacy” on housing issues should be part of the strategy.
- Housing cures homelessness.
- Housing efforts should create/support options for all types of households, not focus on standard detached homes. Even similar households (e.g. single, family with children, friends, etc.) want different housing choices available.

Highest Impact Areas:

- Denser multifamily along transportation corridors
 - Streamline approval process, without losing thoughtfulness, for developments that address housing goals.
 - Occupancy limits
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Group 5

Discussion of Draft Themes:

- Don’t add more themes; fewer is better – focus on limited number

Efficient Use of Existing Stock

- Definitely a theme - a lot of working groups discussed this

Prioritize Preservation

- Resonates strongly with group
- Could mean preserving large senior housing, like Golden West, as well as small homes
- Preserve market-rate affordable
- This theme is about preserving existing affordability
- Preserving existing units seems like good low hanging fruit

Support Diverse Housing Options

- Yes!
- This includes co-ops and ADUs

Engage in Regional Planning and Action

- Resonates strongly with group

Take a Comprehensive Approach to Affordability

- Transportation and utility costs should be taken into account
- Add “Housing” in front of “Affordability”
- Who will take these costs into account? Clarify; not clear who does what?
- This theme doesn’t resonate with group; it dilutes other themes that are more important, so remove and put unbundled parking in another theme

Highest Impact Areas:

- East Boulder 30th to 55th
 - Lot of opportunity here for higher density, walkable new development
 - Less resistance here
 - Do it right, be very thoughtful
 - Make it high quality, not like Boulder Junction
 - Mixed use, retail, housing
 - Lots of surface parking that could be put to use
 - Demand a higher percentage of affordability than currently required by IH
 - Include middle income
- Planning Reserve
 - Look at it, discuss in the BVCP update, even if we decide not to do anything in the near future
 - Could be land bank site
- Occupancy Limit/Co-op Living
 - Co-ops may be less controversial (maybe not)
 - Be careful – raising occupancy limit may actually increase housing values/prices, because rental houses will become a better investment (more tenants allowed = more rent revenue); and could compete with families; do financial analysis first to understand true effects

- May help with density, but not necessarily affordability; vs. assumption that ability to share housing costs = affordability; disagreement on this – need to study
- Be selective, like seniors

Value of the Housing discussion:

- Getting sort of resolution despite differences of opinions
- Hearing other opinions